

REMARKS

Applicants express appreciation to the Examiner for the recent interview held with applicants' representative. The claims have been amended as proposed at the interview. Thus, independent claim 1 has been cancelled and replaced with new independent claim 21 and a corresponding computer program product claim, claim 22. Independent claim 12 has been cancelled and replaced with new independent claim 23. Accordingly, claims 1 – 3, 5 – 6, 10 – 14, 16 – 17 and 20 have been cancelled without prejudice. Dependent claims 4, 7 – 9, 15 and 18 – 19 have been amended, and are presented for reconsideration along with the new independent claims 21 - 23.¹

As presented herein applicants have claimed a method, a corresponding computer program product, and a modular software interface system adapted for use in a digital computing system that includes a main control program exemplified by any of a game code module, an application program, a simulation or an operating system, and wherein the main control program communicates with one or more functional user interface (UI) modules for data processing of a type which does not require human sensory interaction with a user of the computing system. The claimed invention provides for enabling change to any of the human sensory interactions such as visual data display, audio output or video display, without having to change the functional UI modules or main control program.

As claimed, the invention provides a common communication scheme for use between various types of UI modules such as functional UI modules and one or more UI plug-in modules for implementing UI features that provide human sensory interaction such as visual display, video display, or audio display or any combination of the foregoing. A user interface (UI) engine having an engine interface is networked with a main control program running on the computing system so as to provide communication of commands between the main control program and the UI engine. In turn, the UI engine and the main control program and/or other network components are networked to one or more functional UI modules for implementing UI features using functions that do not directly involve human sensory interaction with a user. The UI engine is networked to one or more UI plug-in modules for implementing UI features that provide human sensory interaction such as visual display, video display, or audio display or any

¹ Minor amendments have also been made to the specification to correct spelling, typographical or other minor errors.

combination of the foregoing, with the one or more functional UI modules communicating with the UI engine using the common UI communication scheme and thereby providing to one or more functional UI modules or to the main control program human sensory interaction as required by either the one or more functional UI modules or the main control program. And, then changing, adding or deleting one or more of the UI plug-in modules so as to change the human sensory interaction of one or more functional UI modules or the main control program, the one or more functional UI modules and main control program remain unchanged.

In the Office Action the claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,832,178 (Fernandez et al.). As noted at the interview, Fernandez et al. describes a multi-sensor system that provides various sensors for inputting analog signals for different measurable attributes regarding a sensed object, such as sensors for detecting temperature, pressure or other biometric values. A digital signal is then generated by a processor to indicate one or more conditions of the sensed object to be used for simulation or other applications. See Fernandez et al., abstract.

As discussed, Fernandez et al. is quite different from applicants' claimed method, computer program product and modular software interface system. Nothing in Fernandez et al. addresses the problem solved by applicants' claimed invention, e.g., enabling user and/or developers to change the human sensory aspects of a user interface (such as displaying data, producing audio sounds, performing animation sequences and the like) without having to change the associated functional aspects. Thus, there is nothing in the prior art of record which teaches or suggests the claimed method of:

"providing a common communication scheme for use between various types of UI modules such as functional UI modules and one or more UI plug-in modules for implementing UI features that provide human sensory interaction such as visual display, video display, or audio display or any combination of the foregoing;

networking a user interface (UI) engine having an engine interface with a main control program running on the computing system so as to provide communication of commands between the main control program and the UI engine;

networking to the UI engine and to the main control program and/or other network components one or more functional UI modules for implementing UI features using functions that do not directly involve human sensory interaction with a user;

networking to the UI engine one or more UI plug-in modules for implementing UI features that provide human sensory interaction such as visual display, video display, or audio display or any combination of the foregoing;

said one or more functional UI modules communicating with the UI engine using said common UI communication scheme and thereby providing to one or more functional UI modules or to the main control program human sensory interaction as required by either the one or more functional UI modules or the main control program; and

changing, adding or deleting one or more of the UI plug-in modules so as to change the human sensory interaction of one or more functional UI modules or the main control program, but otherwise leaving one or more functional UI modules and main control program unchanged." (See, e.g., claims 21 and 22 (emphasis added), and compare, e.g., claim 23).

Thus, for at least the reasons the claims are believed to be patentable over the prior art of record. Thus, as noted in the interview summary, the proposed claims now "more clearly [define] the invention . . . by using both UI plug-ins and functional UI modules to provide greater flexibility [and also explain] how the new claims better [define] over the prior art of record." The Examiner acknowledged the foregoing. Thus, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested.

In the event the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 4th day of September, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,



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